

What is claimed:

1. A method of increasing or maintaining the blood supply in the penis of a male subject which comprises administering to the subject an amount of vascular endothelial growth factor effective to increase or maintain the blood supply in the subject's penis.
2. A method of treating erectile dysfunction in a subject which comprises administering to the subject an amount of vascular endothelial growth factor effective to increase the blood supply in the subject's penis and thereby treat the subject's erectile dysfunction.
3. A method of increasing or maintaining the density of vascular structures in the penis of a male subject which comprises administering to the subject an amount of vascular endothelial growth factor effective to increase or maintain the blood supply in the subject's penis.
4. The method of claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the vascular endothelial growth factor is VEGF-A 205/206, VEGF-A 188/189, VEGF-A 164/165, VEGF-A 144/145, VEGF-A 120/121, or VEGF-A 110.
5. The method of claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the vascular endothelial growth factor is administered intravenously, topically, transdermally, orally or by injection.
6. The method of claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the vascular endothelial growth factor is injected into the penis.
7. The method of claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the vascular endothelial growth factor is injected into corpora cavernosa tissue.
8. The method of claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the vascular

endothelial growth factor is injected into corpus spongiosum tissue.

- 5 9. A method of increasing or maintaining the blood supply in the penis of a subject which comprises introducing a nucleic acid comprising a gene encoding a vascular endothelial growth factor into a suitable cell under conditions such that the nucleic acid expresses vascular endothelial growth factor so as to thereby increase or
10 maintain the blood supply in the subject's penis.
10. The method of claim 8, wherein the nucleic acid comprises a vector.
- 15 11. A method of increasing or maintaining the blood supply in the genital area of a female subject which comprises administering to the subject an amount of vascular endothelial growth factor effective to increase or maintain the blood supply in the subject's genital area.